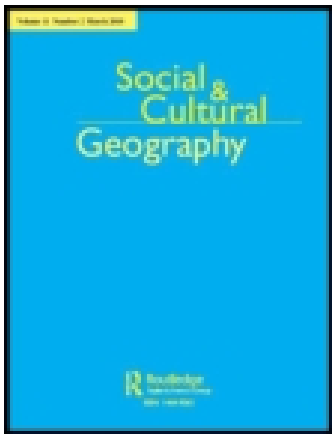

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'I love being in the garden': enchanting encounters in everyday life

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This paper examines how the domestic garden is experienced as an intimate place in everyday life. With reference to Bachelard we seek to analyse prosaic pleasures and enchanting encounters that are revealed through multi-sensorial engagements and emotional attachments within the social/natural world. In particular we focus on three modalities of the everyday: work or tasks involved in gardening; that is, sensuous and embodied experiences explored through the notion of haptic perception; 'cultivation' in the sense of taking care of the garden, as well as caring for the self and others; and emotional attachments invoking body/place memories, especially of childhood gardens. To illustrate these themes we use garden narratives drawn from the Mass Observation Archive (MOA).

Key words: enchantment, gardens, narrative, Mass Observation, everyday life, haptic perception, cultivation, memory.

Introduction

The poetics of gardens

The domestic garden in Britain is a familiar, private, and seemingly insignificant 'everyday' landscape, and yet it is fast becoming a focus of much debate and theorising in the arts, humanities, and social sciences (contributions include: Alfrey, Daniels and Postle 2004; Brown 1999; Cooper 2006; Francis and Hestor 1990; Head and Muir 2006, 2007; Hoyles 1991; Richardson and Kingsbury 2005; Saguaro 2006). We seek to complement these studies by analysing the private garden as an 'extraordinary' place full of enchanting encounters, and extend the recent work on sensuous/embodied/emotional geographies (Feld and Basso 1996; Nast and Pile 1998, Rodaway 1994; Teather 1999; see Davidson and Milligan 2004 for a summary). Being enchanted relates to encounters that can happen during everyday mundane domestic routines, joyful pleasures when time seems to stand still *in* a specific place. These are sensuous embodied experiences which for a moment '*reverberate*', and we use a Bachelardian phenomenology to help us reveal how embodied and psychosocial engagements with the social/natural world occur in everyday life

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(Bachelard 1994). But of course there are many disappointments and frustrations, and garden work often competes with other household duties and can become a chore. For some people plants lovingly cultivated for so long die for no apparent reason, nothing grows no matter how hard they try; for others lack of time means it is a forgotten space. Elsewhere we have focused on gardening in later life as an example of disenchantments that can occur when older people are unable to look after the garden (see Bhatti 2006). We have also explored the contradictory and often frustrating engagements with nature that occur in domestic gardens (Bhatti and Church 2001, 2004). Here we mainly emphasise the positive aspects of everyday encounters in the garden to offer an alternative to some accounts that seek to either escape everyday life, or view the everyday as a political battle ground (see Binnie, Holloway, Millington and Young 2007; Highmore 2002a, 2000b for useful summaries). In this paper we aim to show that everyday life is full of enchanting encounters that work to provide creativity, emotional attachments, and prosaic pleasures.

Enchantment in the garden occurs through a multi-sensorial psycho-geography of everyday life, whereby tactile, sensuous experiences are woven into the fabric of domestic space through 'tasks' (cooking, cleaning, gardening). We analyse these often banal, mundane chores within the framework of spatialised modalities of perceptual/perpetual existence. For us the landscape (or taskscape) of the garden is also constituted as an affective process enacted in natural places that display certain affordances (Gibson 1979; Ingold 2000); that is, places that invoke emotion (Bruno 2002). Our focus on 'doing-gardening' is based around three modalities of everyday life, and moves our previous research towards a deeper phenomenology of gardens. The first modality relates to 'tasks' in the form of work requiring physical technical/human labour, (re)shaping an existing materiality (a *mixing with the earth*); thus for us the garden is not a landscape, but a 'taskscape' (Ingold 2000). The tasks of digging, planting, pruning etc., are dependent upon body technique, use of tools, and the senses. We analyse these through the notion of haptic perception (Bruno 2002; Gibson 1966, 1979; O'Neill 2001; Rodaway 1994). Second, 'cultivation' is a specific form of emotional response arising out of caring for plants and others/self (Casey 1993; Cooper 2006; Hitchings 2003). The final modality of remembering evidences emotional attachments that are experienced by the body as place memories through reverie, especially of childhood gardens (Bachelard 1971, 1994; Casey 2000).

To illustrate these themes we use qualitative data drawn from the Mass Observation Archive (MO) held at the University of Sussex in the UK. This unique archive is principally a writing project first begun in 1937 as an exercise in 'mass observation' and literacy. The second phase from 1981 focused more on life writing and responses to 'directives' (Sheridan 1993). The questions and prompts in the so-called 'directives' are open-ended, and because respondents are free to express themselves anonymously they often write creatively and passionately. The resulting data however is enormously varied, both in quantity and quality and requires narrative forms of analyses. Within limitations, and used carefully, the flexible nature of the MO format often provides rich data usually in the form of 'life stories' or auto/biography. It is a form of life writing that can best be described as 'creative non-fiction' (see Jolly 2001). The panel of respondents is self-selecting, usually more women to men (this has not changed over time) with many over 60, although the

profile is now changing to include more men and younger people. Because the MO respondents write anonymously the researcher has limited information on the person, usually only gender, age, occupation, and town of residence. Responses to the MO cannot therefore be understood as 'representative' in the positivist sense, but they do 'represent' a range of views on contemporary topics (Sheridan, Street and Bloome 2000).

As illustrated through gardens and gardening our data expose daily enchantments, and these 'reverberations' may also be seen in other spheres of the everyday. For example, Luce Giard's autobiographical account of cooking is revealing (de Certeau, Giard and Mayol 1998: 153), 'thus, surreptitiously and without suspecting it, I had been invested with the secret, tenacious pleasure of *doing-cooking*' (original emphasis). And that cooking (like gardening) is embedded in the rhythms of everyday life, 'doing-cooking is the medium for a basic, humble, persistent practice that is repeated in time and space, rooted in the fabric of relationships to others and to one's self, marked by the "family saga", and the history of each, bound to childhood memory just like the rhythms and seasons' (1998: 157). That enchanting encounters can also be seen in other domestic 'chores' such as cooking or cleaning seems to suggest to us that there can be 'tenacious pleasures' in daily routines that are bound to the self, others, and sensuous experiences. We often think of the drudgery of housework (weighing more heavily on women than men), but these can at times be a source of inventiveness, emotionality and comfort; a poetic creativity that gives meaning and purpose to everyday life (other examples might include shopping, Miller 1998; eating, Lupton 1994; walking, Wylie 2005). The paper is in three sections: we start with a discussion of enchantment and the everyday in the context of homes and gardens. In the second section we present qualitative data from the MO to illustrate our selected modalities of everyday life: haptic perception, cultivation, and remembering, and to show how enchanting encounters with the social/natural world emerge through people's daily activities. In the final section we return to our discussion of 'reverberation' and the re-enchanting of everyday life, and conclude (after Bachelard) that being in the garden invokes reverie and a return to our childhood garden through memory and imagination.

Enchanting encounters in everyday life

By enchantment we mean encounters that temporarily transform our connection with the social/natural world. Schneider (1993: 3) suggests that we are enchanted when 'we are faced with something both real and at the same time uncanny, weird, mysterious, or awesome'. Jane Bennett (2001: 104) writes: 'to be enchanted is to be struck and shaken by the extraordinary that lives amid the familiar and the everyday', adding more specifically: 'to be enchanted, then, is to participate in a momentarily immobilizing encounter; it is to be transfixed, spellbound'. She describes such moments as 'Kafkaesque', but Bachelard too is behind Bennett's following comment,'the mood that I call enchantment is provoked by a surprise, by an encounter with something that one did not expect … an energizing feeling of fullness or plenitude—a momentary return to childhood joie de vivre' (2001: 4, 5). Both Schneider's invocation of the uncanny, and Bennett's momentary encounter as—potentially—enchantment's spatio-temporality, resonate for us in the space of the domestic garden. For example, two MO respondents below

eloquently write about being rooted to a place and how for a moment time stands still,

> no matter what I am doing I will break off and take a breather from time to time. I sit and look at the beautiful garden, the trees the birds, the squirrel in the holly tree, the moving clouds and the bright blue sky. I may only take a minute or two, but in that short time I thank God that I was spared to find pleasure in doing nothing for a change. [B1654 Man, 62]

> A small recurring pleasure is a summer night in the garden. I stand and breathe all the marvellous scents, the darkness is soft—not empty but full of life, flowers, trees … I feel it is my own domain. [L1884 Man, 61]

This hope of re-enchantment helps us to foreground the ordinary domestic garden as a creative place in/co-habited by people and 'nature'; a place full of mystery, where simple pleasures can have profound meanings, and where ecology, e/motion, body and memory combine. Of course the garden is a living materiality with a social and natural history, co-created by (previous) gardeners out of specific ecological processes and under certain social, natural and environmental conditions (Richardson and Kingsbury 2005). The garden exists as a material place with a specific past, and gardens live on into the future. So although we could say gardens have 'memories' that shape their continued existence, for example, a harsh winter, a wet summer, it is individuals who remember. This points to different modes of 'time' in the garden (Hitchings 2003), which include 'ecological time', rhythms of the seasons, cycles of growth, day and night, sunrise and sunset. Ecological time interacts with social time revealed through processes of everyday life, such as getting up, hanging out the washing, going to work, eating and sleeping, and pottering about the garden. Plus there is subjective time in the Bergsonian sense (see Game 1995), moments experienced as lived time (duration), and revived through memory. The garden anchors these modes of time in the 'now', where ecological, social and subjective time intersect and interweave. This is because the garden is in many ways quite unique—as Foucault (1986) observes it is that 'other' place; a hybrid space (Whatmore 2002), a coming together of culture and nature; an artefact, an 'in-between' and 'paradoxical' space (Longhurst 2006). Following Heidegger, Casey (1993) distinguishes different types of dwelling: *hestial* dwelling which is a form of permanent residence; *hermetic* dwelling which is a form of aberrant straying. Casey notes however that in the garden there is a different sort of 'being-in-the world'—in the garden we *almost* reside, 'This leaves me on the edge of dwelling … gardens take me to the edge between built and natural places, or rather are that very edge (Casey 1993: 16). We can say, therefore, that the garden affords 'peripatetic dwelling', a tactile sensuous wandering in the social/natural world, or, more prosaically, 'pottering about'; as such the body is quite open to enchanting encounters in the routines and rhythms of everyday life.

Subsequent to the translation into English of work by Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, there has been considerable academic attention paid to the 'everyday' (recent examples include Chaney 2002; Harrison 2007; Highmore 2002a, 2002b; Martin 2003; Moran 2004). Whilst there is much debate about how precisely the 'everyday' is to be defined, and what exactly constitutes everyday life, we take Rita Felski's phenomenological framework as a useful starting point for this paper. Felski (2002) suggests that everyday life is grounded in three processes: time, space, and habit. Repetition defines the everyday in relation to the temporality of social life (cf. Lefebvre); that is, routines of existence, and what happens 'day after day';

eating, sleeping, cleaning, washing, commuting, and, in our case, gardening. Even though everyday life is played out in many different places of work, travel, shopping, and leisure, Felski's feminist perspective privileges the home space. The dwelling becomes a 'home' through familiarity and the creation of a sense of place (Massey 1992; cf. Blunt and Dowling 2006); it is a fixed place from which we travel and return, a symbolic centre or base for the self. A focus on the garden throws new light on the gendered 'home' (Bhatti and Church 2000) and deepens our understanding of social and cultural change. There is a spatial ordering to home-making (a *place* called 'home') operating at different scales through which domestic interiors, garden spaces and localities shape the experience of everyday life. The garden contributes towards home-making through daily routines of domestic duties and leisure activities. The garden is thus shared with others through joint physical 'work', pictures, cuttings, advice, and dialogically with neighbours across the garden fence. Finally, Felski points to the habitual character of everyday life 'The idea of habit crystallises this experience of dailiness' (2002: 26). On the one hand, habit can be a repressive regime of routine, especially for women. But Felski argues that there is an element of banal habit that 'may strengthen, comfort, and provide meaning' (2002: 28), and (after de Certeau 1984), the breaking of habit (no matter how small) is itself creative. In the context of everyday life then, what is it about the domestic garden that 'affords' certain enchantments? How do we experience these enchanting encounters that seem to *reverberate*?

Reverberation is a term Bachelard uses in the Introduction to *The Poetics of Space* (1994: xvi–xxvii) with reference to the transsubjectivity of poetic images, 'In resonance we hear the poem, in the reverberation we speak it, it is our own'. For Bachelard resonance and reverberation are modes of activity that contrast with physical causality and cannot be analysed using rational science (including psychology or psychoanalytic theory). It suggests a different ontology, one best described using notions such as sound waves, sonority, vibration, echoes, motion (see Game 1995). This ontology chimes with those proposed by a range of thinkers from Spinoza and Leibniz (both of whom proposed music-centred variants of metaphysics which emphasised the harmonies and dissonances of interlacing multiplicities) through Bergson and Whitehead (for whom basic reality is essentially an ongoing *vibratory* composition) to Deleuze and Stengers (who synthesise this tradition into a contemporary arrangement—see Brown and Stenner forthcoming; Deleuze 1988, 1992; Stengers 2002). Bachelard is key to this aesthetic rethinking of ontology which foregrounds creativity and affect. In developing a phenomenology that considers the power of the image to take root and 'bring about a change of being', Bachelard focuses on poetry as it 'aspires to go so far and so deep, because of methodological obligations, it must go beyond the sentimental resonances with which we receive … a work of art'. It is the image invoked by a poem that reverberates through us, and in making this image our own we are 'bringing about a veritable awakening of poetic creation'. Thus the reader 'creates' the image anew, by possessing it and in the process 'the poetic image places us at the origin of the speaking being'.

By suggesting that enchanting encounters in the garden 'reverberate', we are going beyond a simple recognition of our relationship to the natural world. An encounter that moves us has depth of being; it has an affect in/on the body, which in turn affects its surroundings. Indeed Bachelard himself (1994: 94–95) reports

walking in his garden in a melancholy mood and coming across a nest in a hedge, he looks in and sees a setting bird, 'But it doesn't fly away, it only quivers a little. I tremble at making it tremble'. The enchanting encounter for Bachelard represents a reverberation, 'found in natural surroundings, and which becomes for a moment the centre of the entire universe, the evidence of a cosmic situation'. This cosmic situation arises because the nest is a 'lived image' that transverses the now and then, the here and there. In evoking the notion of the nest as a 'lived image' Bachelard's thought resonates with that of Bergson, who proposed the concept of the 'image' as the core of an alternative to the conventional ontological entrapment within a 'reality'–'representation' duality. The nest-as-image is neither a 'brute reality' nor a subjective 'representation', but something in between: something that lives in a vibratory space of relationality. The encounter with the bird leaves Bachelard in a much altered state of being: 'Today, I am happy, because some birds have built a nest in my garden'. This provokes a phenomenology of nests, 'our capacity to recapture the naïve wonder we used to feel when we found a nest. This wonder is lasting, and today when we discover a nest it takes us back to our childhood, or rather, to a childhood'. For Bachelard this not only represents the creativity of human beings, their powers of affect and subjectivity, but by 'seizing the specific reality' of an image, we are able to measure its 'trans-subjectivity'. It is through the writing of these experiences as enchanting encounters, as expressive images of the particular and the universal as combined, that trans-subjectivity takes hold. And we as readers are also affected, as Game (1995: 199) comments 'If the image expresses us, the reading process is also a writing, a reverberation, an act of creation'. Many MO respondents wrote of being enchanted in their gardens: becoming suddenly aware of shades and colours, touching a worm, catching the wind; getting hands dirty in the soil, hearing a sprinkle of water; smelling a flower that takes them back to childhood. It is to these writings contained in the MO archive that we now turn.

Doing, cultivating, and remembering the garden

In this section we present our ideas about haptic perception, cultivation, and remembering the garden, which derive from the empirical material from the MO archive. The MO and its production through the record of 'ordinary' writers is a unique contribution to what might be called the British everyday in the sphere of home. The data presented below is also private because it lies in an archive, waiting silently to be animated by writers and researchers. Written anonymously, it offers privileged access to a jealously guarded space. Thus the MO offers a very specific insight into the emotional geography of the domestic garden; narratives that reveal daily encounters of domestic life, the wonder of nature and, of course, frequent frustrations and disappointments. These lay narratives are largely in the form of brief snippets, 'life stories' and personal views on a particular topic, although the telling of a life history through a theme (such as the garden) is also a feature. Two or three times annually MO panellists are invited to respond in writing to a 'directive'; these provide narratives of the familiar, private garden that is a distinctive feature of British urban life, whether metropolitan or rural. The garden directives on which this paper is based were issued in spring 1998 and summer 2007. The 1998 directive entitled 'Gardens and Gardening' generated over 250 written responses and nearly 350 photographs almost

exactly 2:1 women to men. Respondents were asked to write about significant personal themes that related to their gardens. These ranged from childhood memories; for example, particular plants that had special significance, or recollections of family members and events. Further questions included how respondents learnt to garden, and how and by whom gardening knowledge was passed on; what they liked and disliked about their gardens; who does what in the garden, etc. The 2007 directive entitled 'You and Gardens' asked respondents to write about their 'ideal' garden, and comment on gardening programmes on television and radio. We also asked about 'special places' in the garden, and what they would feel about not having a garden. Finally, we asked respondents to write a one-week garden diary, highlighting any work and/or pottering about, and how the garden was used every day, for example, hanging out washing, sitting etc. We received 160 replies, some of them quite detailed. The second source of data is responses from the 'Pleasure and Enjoyment' directive issued in 1993; this elicited 387 responses, with three-quarters from women. Respondents were asked to write about the nice things that they like to do and report in detail on ten things that gave them pleasure and enjoyment. These could range from very simple everyday things, to extravagant treats that were experienced rarely. An interesting theme that emerged here was that people wrote about the pleasures of contact with nature from wild open space, woods to everyday interactions in their gardens. Responses are identified with a number followed by the gender of the respondent and their age. In the context of (re)enchantment of everyday life then, our questions relate to what kinds of encounters in the garden form an aesthetic, a pleasure, however prosaic, that we might recognise as enchantment. And how precisely are we enchanted, how do these modalities of everyday life lend themselves to such encounters?

'This labour of love': doing-gardening

For MO respondents work in the garden is a bodily experience that may be pleasurable or painful or both. In the extracts reproduced below the garden invariably means work, physical tasks ranging from simple moving about, to bending, kneeling, pushing a mower, hard digging or gentle weeding. This woman comments in her diary

> Weeded in between our growing vegetables. I never mind weeding as you can let your mind roam … I could not live without a small patch. Time flies when you are weeding or planting out and it is difficult to feel depressed for long. [Y 2789 Woman, 80]

This woman has made her garden her home, working towards a near complete domestication of outdoor space.

> I 'live' in the garden. The work occupies a large amount of time. I have a greenhouse for when it rains, and to grow house plants and seeds and tomatoes. On a typical summer's day I would be outside in the garden, greenhouse or summer house from 8am until dark with visits to the house for food and toilet only … I do the most of the grass cutting, all the digging, planting and weeding … I am passionate about the garden. If the weather is at all reasonable, I am out in it. I enjoy being outside, and the garden is an excuse, but it is *beautiful*. [W2338 Woman, 65, original emphasis]

Quite often the garden can take on greater significance, a form of embodied vocation not

always recognised at the time. Here hard labour and sacrifices endured reshape a garden which its owner considers his 'main project',

> I did all the work manually, using no mechanical appliances … it took over two years. I threw myself into this labour of love with great gusto, suspending many of my usual leisure activities. Looking back I can hardly believe that I found the energy to do it all. [C110 Man, 64]

He then explains why his labour of love was so important

> In fact, I now can see that it was precisely because this was a very stressful period in my business life, that I found such peace in the physical effort of heavy sweaty labour.

The physicality of labouring in the garden as an antidote to stress is a common theme.

> There's something very satisfying in turning over old planting beds and pulling out weeds! Whenever I feel stressed or angry, I still go out into the garden and pull up weeds to work it out of my system. [W1813 Woman, 47]

People also take pleasure in garden work, evident to us in the way the following quotes emphasise the range of sensory responses.

> One of my favourite occupations is mowing the lawns. I love the smell of freshly-cut grass, and being outside doing something, and the reward of seeing everything look finished and neat. [T1843 Woman, 48]

> I love to see things grow, watch the changing seasons, feel the sun on my back as I work and watch the many birds as they feed. [W2338 Woman, 68]

Pottering about seems to be popular,

> Wherever I've lived that had a garden, I would potter about in it, without exactly knowing what I was doing. [Z53 Woman, 71]

If work in the garden can be enchanting it may be because it has a certain physical dimension, for which we use the term 'haptic perception'. Haptic perception is narrowly defined as the 'sense of touch', a function of the skin, but Bruno extends the meaning, 'the haptic is also related to kinesthesis, the ability of our bodies to sense their own movement in space' (Bruno 2002: 6). This helps to explain how we sense the world, sometimes through tasks and tools as well as directly through the senses (see Bruno 2002; Feld and Basso 1996; Gibson 1966, 1979; Ingold 2000; O'Neill 2001; Rodaway 1994). Haptic perception therefore involves the whole body and all of the senses, a total and synthetic experience which according to Gibson 'is the looking, listening, touching and sniffing that goes on when the perceptual system is at work' (1982: 397). For Gibson the world is perceived most significantly through movement; that is, the body moves in time and through space in the material world gathering knowledge for a particular purpose. As Ingold explains (2000: 166) such movement is always practical, 'It is knowledge about what an environment offers for the pursuance of the action in which the perceiver is currently engaged … to perceive an object or an event is to perceive what it "affords"'. This Gibsonian notion of environmental 'affordances' (whereby natural places afford certain human responses lacking in built spaces) echoes Bachelard's distinction between an experience of resonance ('we hear the poem') and an expression of reverberation ('we speak the poem') which in turn echoes Spinoza's distinction between the capacity to be affected and the capacity to affect (1993 [1677]). In our case the garden affords

a series of bodily multi-sensorial encounters, that is, a literal and metaphorical 'mixing with the earth', which can at certain moments be enchanting.

This suggests that gardens present a specific materiality and ecology, where certain kinds of information and knowledge are perceived and remembered by the gardener for the purposes of 'doing-gardening'. This is an affective perceptual experience in motion involving multi-sensory modes. When gardening humans also use tools, and haptic perception is extended to these, such that they become another feeling 'part' of the body. Furthermore, Guiliana Bruno (2002: 203) writes of the walk though the (eighteenth-century) public garden as producing new sensibilities; as the body senses space through movement, it too is touched and there is a coupling of motion with emotion—it becomes 'a sensuous space of e*motion*' (original emphasis). In the garden even sight is a haptic perception involving emotion, the moment when the image strikes the eye, 'a touching experience of feeling through the eye was a means of activating the senses in a cumulative sequence of emotional responses' (Bruno 2002: 219). This might best be encapsulated by Merleau-Ponty's (1962) idea of the 'feeling body' which is also affective as much as embodied. Although her focus is on the emotional geographies of historic gardens, Bruno's elegant thesis applies equally well to the contemporary domestic garden, and the modalities of 'embodying landscape' (Crouch and Malm 2003) that the garden offers. So sensuous embodied practices such as planting or digging incorporate tender/haptic geographies (Rodaway 1994) and the garden is a site where these can be fully memorialised, apprehended and appreciated.

'I love being in the garden': cultivating natures

We suggest that in 'doing-gardening' gardeners are also taking care of the self, and others (Casey 1993: 172–173). In linking place and action, gardens and gardening to this interpretation of cultivation, the garden becomes a part of their daily social lives; and thus taking care of the garden implicates a sociality that involves caring for the self and others, often in the context of home-making. For example, this woman gardens with her grandchildren,

> My granddaughters help with planting the pots and watering and weeding. I talk to them about the birds that come down into the garden and the creatures they find. A hedgehog has a home behind the swing and we put pet food out for him and have a look at him now and then to see how he's grown over the winter. They plant nasturtiums and take the pots home. They get sunflower seeds out of the aviary and plant them in their gardens. [W632 Woman, 56]

This man describes how even the most banal of garden tasks gave him pleasure, and thus is about a rediscovery of self,

> A couple of years ago, much to my surprise I discovered that mowing the lawn was something I actually enjoyed doing. What had previously been a deeply mundane task proved itself to be an experience so satisfyingly restful it is a wonder it isn't available on prescription as a cure for the stresses for modern living. [C3167 Man, 35]

For this woman gardening has a very deep and personal role in her life, which echoes Daniel Miller's suggestion of domestic, daily tasks being an expression of love, literally 'making' love (Miller, in Highmore 2002b: 342):

When my husband was alive he used to look after the plants and flowers in the house—now I treasure the plants he grew and look after them like the apple of my eye! Most of my 'gardening' is done on my husband's grave where I really do take a great deal of trouble to keep it looking lovely all the year round. My pride are some rose bushes I planted on the occasion of each of my granddaughters' births and they flower beautifully each year. [W2276 Woman, 72]

Although caring for others comes through quite strongly, equally a desire, a need even, for to care for the self is evident.

I love my garden, it means pleasure and solitude if I need it. [A1735 Woman, 71]

On a summer evening I come down to the herbs and sit and just breathe the scent of them and go round them and touch and smell them, then sit and just relax. It unwinds me completely, it's so peaceful and quiet. [W729 Woman, 40]

A specific element of gardening, noted in particular by David Cooper in his *The Philosophy of Gardens* (2006), is the manifestation of care and concern, and we find that many experiences of 'cultivation' as caring arise when the garden becomes 'inhabited' by the self as well as being shared with significant others. This form of cultivation foregrounds not only the social context within which gardening takes place (as family leisure for example) but also its psychosocial orientation as a purposeful activity that includes a valorisation of the self alongside a caring for others (see Miller 1998, where he suggests shopping for food as an example of love and care for a family). As our respondents report, 'doing-gardening' offers a multitude of opportunities to cultivate both the garden itself, the mind (though some would say the soul or human spirit, e.g. Moore 1996) and at the same time cultivate relationships with friends, family, and non-human beings (e.g. plants, insects, birds and animals, see Hitchings 2003).

'That happy little place': the garden remembered

Most people have memories of a real or imagined 'secret garden' and such memories often stay with them all their lives. Memories of gardens relate not only to what is remembered, but the senses greatly influence how the past can be revisited; the garden mediates memories of childhood, escape and innocence, as well as recollections of family members and key events. These 'pre-loved' gardens solicit some very vivid responses. It is noticeable that for some MO respondents specific senses trigger these memories, further evidence of the role of haptic perception in recall:

I loved being in the garden. I loved the dark stuffy places, corners, hidden bits, and all the smells that went with them. I have quite deep memories of my grandparents' garden, but I don't know why. I wasn't particularly close to them. But the smell of the warm potting shed full of plants and compost takes me straight back there. [A1706 Woman, 51]

If there is one plant which brings back vivid memories, it is the scrubby, boring stubborn elder! The pond was surrounded by impenetrable thickets of it … and the smell! A pungent, unique smell that I have associated ever since with crouching on the warm earth inside this dense thicket, talking and making childish plans, and just glimpsing the wind-ruffled water of our pond through the leaves. Fiddling and pushing past the elder leaves and stems into our own secluded den caused it to give off the aroma, which though smelt ever since, has

immediately taken my mind back to that happy little place. [T1843 Woman, 48]

MO respondents also associate the garden with specific flowers, plants, and of course people.

There are two kinds of flowers that remind me of my childhood and my mother who must have had green fingers … sunflowers were what I remembered from the little back garden in the East End of London, and then later on after many moves, my mother always had geraniums, even in the larder. I also have them now, and they always remind me of her. [Z53 Woman, 71]

I think back quite often to my days spent in that garden. Certain flowers do evoke memories—Michaelmas daisies remind me of the many hours spent making daisy chains at my grandparents house … blue bells remind me of long walks with my mother through some bluebell woods … My mother and I used to go out looking for and identifying wild flowers, I still have some in a book that I pressed. Flowers mainly bring back childhood memories—when my grandpa died in early March 1947, I picked some snowdrops to put on his grave, and still think of that each time the snowdrops come out. [W571 Woman, 60]

This woman's story recalls Bachelard's enchanting encounter with the birds' nest,

Dad would always show us where the nests were and what the eggs looked like … It was always exciting finding a nest and then visiting it again and hearing the little tweets and seeing the yellow beaks pointing expectantly upwards. For years we had an almost white blackbird come into the garden. We simply grew up with them, and to this day I love the sound of the dawn chorus and recognise all birds as my familiar friends. [T1843 Woman, 48]

The flowers I remember most that dad grew were everlasting flowers in glorious colours and bronze chrysanths. Even today, I've only to see bronze chrysanthemums and smell their own particular scents and I am back in that garden with my happy memories. [T540 Woman, 70]

Finally, memories of enchanting encounters can also be significant, even magical.

Also in my garden at home (parents house) was an old pear tree against the back wall. When I was very young, my mother used to cut out leaf shapes from green card and write messages on them in mirror writing—these she said were from a pixie that lived in the tree! My brother and I would leave messages for him and things like hats made from acorn cups etc in the tree. I remember this as a magical experience and although I think I knew at the time that it was mum doing it, the chance that it might not be intrigued me. [C3971, Woman, 26]

These examples work to endorse Bachelard's phenomenology which suggests that the 'lived image' of the garden 'reverberates'; through this reverberation the garden has the power to be enchanting, and the garden is also imagined and remembered through the body.

Taking into account our previous modalities of haptic perception and cultivation, we suggest that the garden as a much loved site is where memory becomes embodied. Our interpretation here follows Casey who suggests, 'body memory is in turn the natural centre of any sensitive account of remembering. It is the privileged point of view from which other memorial points of view can be illuminated' (Casey 2000: 148). Thus we remember in, by and through the body. If our memories are a form of knowledge about ourselves, then we suggest that they are sourced by the past through our bodies in the form of

interactions between haptic perception, the senses, tactile experiences, and movement.

Conclusion: just pottering about?

The brief narratives presented above help to focus on the prosaic pleasures afforded by the garden, which we propose offer a simple yet profound 're-enchantment of everyday life' (Moore 1996). For some MO respondents the garden is an everyday workplace of bodily pleasures; getting hands dirty, being out in the wind, rain and sunshine; or aching from hard digging. At other times doing nothing in the garden is a source of enjoyment—simply 'being' in the garden can give people tremendous pleasure through a state of repose, of relaxation, and a deeper connection with nature or a quasi-natural surrounding—a material imagination according to Bachelard. Felski (2002: 18) suggests that habit is 'the characteristic mode of experiencing the everyday'; Bachelard (1994: 15) notes however that 'The word habit is too worn a word to express this passionate liaison of our bodies with an unforgettable house'. Evidently this paper takes the 'unforgettable' garden as its spatial order, but Felski's interpretation of repetition and habit as integral to the everyday helps us to re-think the embodied processes at work in enchanting encounters in the routine and mundane tasks of domestic life.

It is also useful to think of the domestic garden as a 'homely' site, and the domestication/inhabitation of the garden, as with the meanings of home, is equally a form of 'cultivation' of social relationships (Casey 1993: 291), motivated by a complex range of emotional/social processes that speaks of, and to, longing and belonging, domestication, family, work and play, love and death—in short, the range that characterises everyday life. For Bachelard (1971) it is through occupying intimate places (*felicitous space*) that reverie emerges, and in reverie we revisit our childhood and, as revealed by the MO respondents, the garden holds these memories in place. Gertrude Jekyll (1908: 1) remarks on the persistence of her childhood enchantments, which she puts down to her vocation as a gardener, 'Well do I remember the time I thought there were two kinds of people in the world—children and grown ups,—and the world really belonged to the children. And I think it is because I have been more or less a gardener all my life that I still feel like a child in many ways'. Why should gardening help Gertrude Jekyll to 'feel like a child' in her later life? In the *Poetics of Space*, Bachelard similarly suggests that 'the child is in the adult' and 'we remain young late in life'. Often it is the embodied routines of everyday life through which the garden becomes an object/subject of memorialisation, a 'dwelling place for memories'; indeed as the house is for Bachelard. Cooper suggests (after Bachelard 1971) the garden affords reverie,

> the thoughts of a man or woman sitting or strolling quietly in a garden alight now on this and now on that, fluidly following their own bent, not fixated on a particular issue or object … this nicely captures the fluid, passive, uninhibited character of reverie, and of its journey through thought, imagination and memory. (2006: 83–84)

Similarly, Luce Giard (de Certeau, Giard and Mayol 1998: 153) reports that doing-cooking requires a multiple memory of apprenticeship, of witnessed gestures which flow into reverie, 'with moving hands, careful fingers, the whole body inhabited with the rhythm of working, and the mind awakening, freed from its own ponderousness, flitting from idea to memory, finally seizing on a certain chain of thought'.

Many respondents reported that they enjoyed simply 'pottering about', which meant doing odd jobs in an unplanned random manner mainly for the pleasures and joys of nature, of the body inhabiting the garden. Through this pottering they also experienced reverie; a certain kind of space that is neither here nor there, but in-between, a mode of 'being' always in sensual *e*motion, a 'reverberation' in Bachelard's phenomenology.

The garden contributes to home-making principally because it also requires embodied practices to re-animate it: it is a space where 'the individual encounters landscape in complex, multi-dimensional practices' (Crouch and Malm 2003: 254). For example, the physical exercise of gardening is an activity that, as Bachelard (1994: 67–68) remarks about polishing furniture inside the house, may be one that brings enchantment, a tactile activity that releases magic. Or love as Miller (1998) suggests in relation to shopping. We would argue that longing for something beyond the material suffuses even our most mundane activities, and hence the prosaic or the everyday is the place where we can and do allow those unruly arational or irrational impulses room to move us. Thus the 'private' material on daily life in the MO is a useful place to go looking for prosaic pleasures such as everyday enchantments; as shown by this woman,

> I can't imagine a world without flowers and plants and beautiful trees, nature is a miracle, and even at times when I am feeling a bit low, I have only to see a lovely view of pretty flowers, it makes me smile and feel better, in spite of the awfulness going on in the world, nature still survives and makes a difference to how one feels. I am not a gardener, but get a feeling of success when one of my cuttings does take root and begin to grow. [Z53 Woman, 71]

The MO material allows us to look at the garden as an inside/outside space, a domestic exterior *and* a private intimate place. In her *Atlas of Emotion* Giuliana Bruno traces the coming of cinema through eighteenth-century gardenesque, where the (public) garden was a series of pictures, unfolding before the moving body as a visual narrative invoking e*motion* and memory for the walker. Bruno (2002: 196) writes: 'the garden's capacity for fluid geography derives from its ability to house a private, even secretive experience while serving fully as a social space'. In this sense what we witness in the writings from the MO is a flowing psychogeography of contradictory sites (Foucault 1986); some very private moments, but at the same time embedded in the ecological, spatial, material and the social. We have articulated the domestic garden as an enchanting landscape of everyday life, noting that (re)enchantment in the garden involves a certain kind of sensibility: a 'doing' through haptic perception; a caring through cultivating; and emotionality through memory. This is encapsulated in Bachelard's phenomenology, a poetics of the garden in which enchanting encounters reverberate in time, place and memory.

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Abstract translations

«J'adore être dans le jardin»: des rencontres enchanteresses dans la vie quotidienne

L'article a pour objectif d'examiner dans quelle mesure le jardin domestique est vécu comme un espace intime dans la vie quotidienne. S'appuyant sur les travaux de Bachelard, une étude est menée sur les plaisirs prosaïques et les rencontres enchanteresses qui se manifestent à travers les rendez-vous multisensoriels et les liens émotifs au sein du monde social/naturel. Elle porte plus particulièrement sur trois figures du quotidien: des travaux ou des tâches qui ont trait au jardinage, c'est-à-dire les expériences sensuelles et incarnées qui sont analysées au moyen de la notion de perception haptique; la «culture» au sens de s'occuper du jardin et de se soucier de soi-même et des autres; et les liens émotifs qui éveillent des souvenirs du corps/lieu, notamment ceux du jardin de l'enfance. Ces thèmes sont illustrés par les récits sur le jardin extraits de la Mass Observation Archive (MOA).

Mots-clefs: enchantement, jardins, récit, Mass Observation, vie quotidienne, perceptions haptiques, culture, souvenir.

'Me encanta estar en el jardín': encuentros encantadores en la vida cotidiana

Este papel examina la experiencia del jardín doméstico como un lugar íntimo en la vida

cotidiana. Haciendo referencia a Bachelard tratamos de analizar los placers prosaicos y encuentros encantadores desvelados mediante interacciones multisensoriales y apegos afectivos dentro del mundo social/natural. En particular, centramos en tres modalidades de lo cotidiano: el trabajo o tareas involucrados en la jardinería; experiencias sensuales y encarnadas, exploradas a través de la noción de percepción háptica; 'cultivo' en el sentido de cuidar del jardín, además de cuidar del ser y de otros; apegos afectivos que invocan recuerdos de cuerpo/lugar, especialmente los jardines de la infancia. Para ilustrar estos temas incluímos narrativas de jardines del Archivo de Observación de Masas (Mass Observation Archive) (MOA).

Palabras claves: encanto, jardines, narrativa, Observación de Masas, vida cotidiana, percepción háptica, cultivo, memoria.